

Ethical Shopping

To Combat Slavery & Promote Creation Care For Catholics



When we shop are we supporting slavery? Are we creating a burden on the environment?

These are questions that are starting to weigh on many of us as we hear more about the prevalence of slavery in our world. Think about the hands that created your clothes or harvested your food. Were they children? Did they suffer? How much pollution and waste was produced in the manufacturing process?

In order to produce goods cheaply and quickly, companies may be giving up ethical and environmental measures to meet the demand for cheaper products. Ethical or Fair Trade represents an employment or trade relationship based on the treatment of workers, artisans and farmers, providing fair wages, safer working conditions and consideration to the community and environment. Fair Trade certification and the adoption of ethical standards secures the rights of workers, reduces poverty and promotes sustainable development. When consumers choose fair trade or ethically sourced products, they create demand for more products that do not involve child labor and instead support the workers while providing safe and sustainable employment.

These are things we want to consider as conscientious consumers. We have the power to support greater causes through our purchases. Below are ways to shop ethically to support people and the earth.

How to Shop & Consume Ethically

READ LABELS. To ensure the product you purchase is not made by child labor or slave trade, reading labels can guide you in seeking ethically sourced products that support the people and the environment where the item originates. Although a number of fair trade certification agencies and standards exist, you can simply google most companies to find out more about their specific standards with respect to the environment and child labor practices even if they are not fair trade certified. Look for the company's 'sustainability' report. Here are some third-party organization labels that indicate ethical policies are in place:



LOOK FOR PRODUCTS MADE BY SURVIVORS

By purchasing items created by survivors of violence and human trafficking, you provide survivors a head start on a new life and from falling back into the hands of traffickers or their abuser. Many victims are exploited as children and have little formal education, so they must build skills to gain sustainable income. Survivors often do this through the creation and sale of hand-crafted goods.

SHOP WITH HELPING ORGANIZATIONS

SERRV International is a nonprofit online store dedicated to fighting global poverty through ethical trade. More than 8,000 artisans and farmers in 25 countries are empowered by sustainable employment, fair wages and safe working conditions where they find security and dignity in their work and are able to send their children to school. To learn more about purchasing fair trade items or hosting a fair-trade sale or market at your church or organization, go to: <https://www.serrv.org>

Educating Your Parish

The Coalition of Catholic Organizations Against Human Trafficking (CCOAHT) resolves to put an end to human trafficking. <http://www.usccb.org/about/anti-trafficking-program/coalition-of-catholic-organizations-against-human-trafficking.cfm>

The 'Become A Shepherd' toolkit PDF is a parish resource guide to educate and provide handouts, literature, prayers, bulletin posts and more on human trafficking. <http://www.usccb.org/about/anti-trafficking-program/index>
2021 Parish Anti-Trafficking Toolkit [CCOAHT Human Trafficking Prevention Month and Day of Prayer Tool Kit](#)

Laudato Si': On Care of Our Common Home: Free downloadable pdf: <https://laudatosi.com>

USCCB on the Environment: <https://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/index.cfm>

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